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Carpet, Mattress Recycling Made Simple

Two how-to guides for recycling [scrap carpet](#) and used [mattresses](#) have been released by the Product Stewardship Institute.

PSI says 50,000 mattresses are discarded each day in the US, or about 20 million annually. While as much as 90 percent of mattress components — steel, cotton and foam — are recyclable, less than 5 percent of mattresses are salvaged annually. The rest present operational problems for landfills and waste-to-energy plants.

Scrap carpet [waste](#) also poses a looming threat; PSI says Americans discard nearly 3.9 million tons of carpet and rugs each year and [recycling](#) only about 7.5 percent.

In May, [Connecticut became the first state](#) to require manufacturers to manage, and consumers to fund, mattress recycling programs. Rhode Island and California will implement similar programs in 2016. California, the only state with a similar producer responsibility law for carpet, launched its program in 2011.

Funded by the US Department of Agriculture, the guides lay out key steps to reduce waste and set the stage for successful product stewardship programs. They provide tools for state and local governments to:

- Increase awareness of recycling opportunities and best practices.
- Implement convenient and effective collection systems.
- Collaborate with various stakeholders in the carpet and mattress life cycle, including consumers, suppliers, dealers, recyclers, and manufacturers, to facilitate and advance recycling.
- Increase market development opportunities for recycled carpet and mattress components.

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